

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

Permanent Collection



Twentieth - Century
Sculpture

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

A handbook to twentieth-century sculpture

This small but interesting collection of twentieth century sculpture has only been acquired over the last ten years. The Mackelvie Trust, under the chairmanship of Mr Richard Gross and later Mr Geoffrey Rix-Trott, has acquired the greater proportion of the works. Lately, a few of the bronzes have been acquired out of the Gallery's own funds.

This handbook is intended to help the visitor and also to provide an illustrated record of the sculpture acquisitions to date.

P. A. TOMORY



HILAIRE GERMAINE EDGAR DEGAS
(1834-1917)

FEMME METTANT SON BAS

Bronze 18¼ ins 29/H

Inscribed *Degas*

Rewald, *Degas, Works in Sculpture*, New York, No. LVI p. 26, rpr. p. 121.

Purchased by the Committee, 1956

This bronze figure of a dancer putting on her stockings belongs to the series of seventy-four figures executed in wax by Degas. Seventy-two wax models were cast posthumously by A. A. Hébrard, and this particular figure was number 14 in Hébrard's exhibition of the bronzes, held in Paris in 1921. The original wax figure belongs to a private collector and was recently exhibited at Messrs Knoedler, New York. (November-December 1955. No. 54 and plate.)

According to Rewald, this work was made between 1896 and 1911. It is one of the finest of all these figures and the Gallery is extremely fortunate to have acquired this work. Other bronzes of the same figure are in the Louvre, Paris (29/P), the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (29/A), and Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen (29/R).

There is no question of Degas being a sculptor of considerable powers, and it is interesting to reflect that all these studies were made mainly to

aid his painting. When his eyesight failed him he was still able through his fingers to create one minor masterpiece after another. In a subject-matter which so easily can and does induce the most sugary forms of sentiment, Degas remains always unsentimental and essentially close to life. A common action is ennobled and monumentalised by his art.



AUGUST RODIN (1840-1917)

LA GRAND DANSEUSE A

Bronze 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ ins No. 4/12

Inscribed *A. Rodin No. 4*

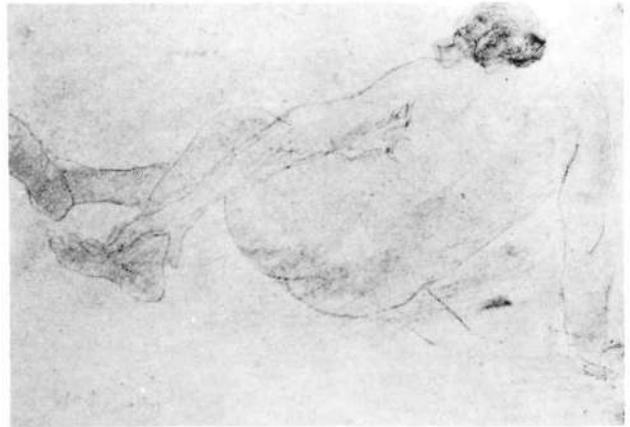
Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1957

In about 1911, Rodin began work on a series of six figures of dancers. These figures were based

on the dancing group formed by Isadora Duncan, who contributed so much to the art of the dance.

The artist's first meeting with Isadora Duncan is recorded in her autobiography, *My Life*, 1928 (1938 ed.), p. 99-100; and on p. 316 she describes him sketching her pupils (the date being approximately 1913). *Danseuse A*, our figure, was the only large figure executed by Rodin. These studies were never cast by the sculptor, but were cast posthumously by Rodin's founder, Rudier.

Rodin was an anti-classicist sculptor who strove to induce into his material not only movement in the mass, but by rough modelling his planes created a feeling of vitality over the whole surface. He was the strongest influence in freeing the sculptor from the frozen neo-classical forms introduced by Canova (1757-1822).



AUGUST RODIN (1840-1917)

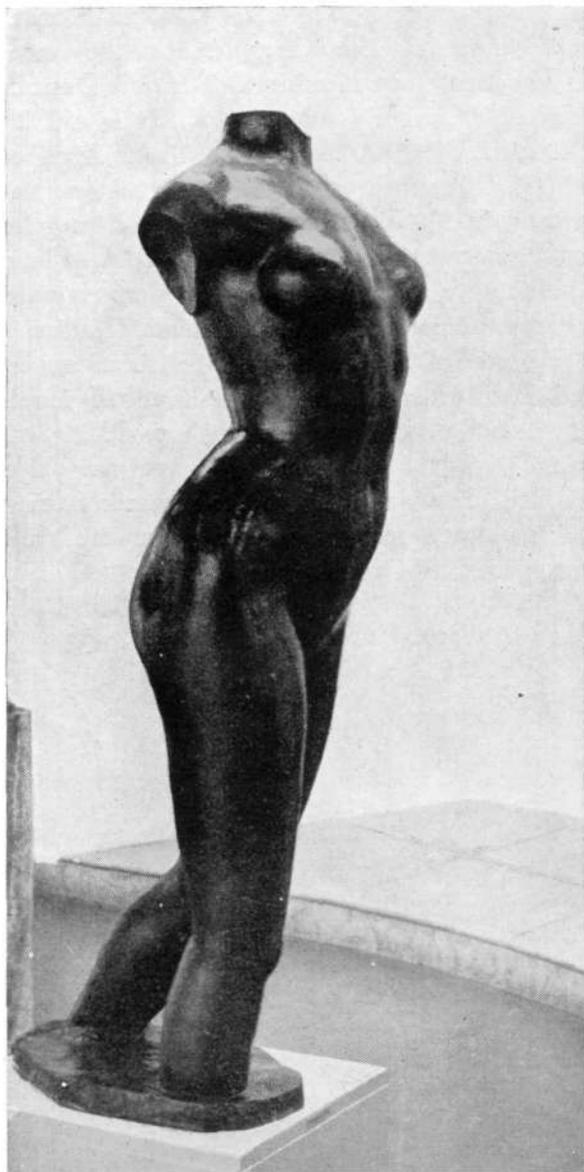
A FEMALE NUDE

Pencil & watercolour 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{8}$

Signed *A. Rodin*

Presented by Messrs Roland, Browse & Delbanco, 1956

Rodin was a master of line drawing and of delicate wash drawings. His drawings, like his sculpture, have great vitality. In his many hundreds of drawings he incessantly returns to the human figure and the variations of position and movement of which it is capable.



ARISTIDE MAILLOL (1861-1944) French
 THE WOMAN WHO WALKS THROUGH WATER
 Bronze 46½ ins (excluding base) 6/6
 Signed with monogram M in a circle
 Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1957

Up to the time of acquisition, this bronze was in Maillol's house at Marly-le-Roil, in the possession of the sculptor's son. It represents one of the ideas which later became one of Maillol's greatest works — *L'Île de France*. Its main point of difference lies in the right leg, which is in-turning

in our version, and the whole body thrusts forward more. In the finished work the right leg is out-turning and is straighter. Although it is a little difficult to tell, the arms in the Auckland version would have come closer together than they do in the full figure. *L'Île de France* is dated about 1910, so that our bronze is probably a little earlier. The truncated version of the *L'Île de France* (in the Museum of Modern Art, New York) has the legs cut off close to the knees, and the top half of the upper arms retained, but an examination of it would appear to suggest that it is not an exact replica.

Maillol was a simplifier of forms and his work is completely opposed to Rodin. It is this simplicity of form which permits admiration of his sculpture, both for its abstract qualities and his entirely honest, sensual feeling for the human body.



HENRI GAUDIER-BRZESKA (1891-1915) English
 THE IDIOT
 Bronze 6¾ ins

This bronze is one of the more considerable works of a sculptor whose working life was three years. Henri Gaudier was born in France and

adopted the second name of Brzeska after his removal to England. There are up to four known bronzes of this work. One is at Leicester Art Gallery (No. 3 in the recent Arts Council exhibition). This bronze is in fact a self portrait, and the title comes from the constant use of the term by Sophie Brzeska (see Brodzky, *Henri Gaudier-Brzeska*, p. 28), although no mention is made of the head in either Brodzky's or H. S. Ede's book. It is, however, reproduced in Brodzky's biography (pl. facing p. 66). One of the casts, belonging to Alan Fraser, was exhibited in the London exhibition of 1918 (No. 21). As a self portrait it is a very good likeness and a drawing of himself (Brodzky, facing p. 148) was perhaps done about the same time (1912). Ezra Pound in his 'memoir' relates that '*He (Gaudier) also parodied himself and his sister in wax, which parodies she threw either at him or at the stove.*' It is not unlikely that one of these *parodies* survived to be cast into bronze.



HENRI GAUDIER-BRZESKA (1891-1915) English
PORTRAIT OF MRS WOLMARK

Pencil 9¾ x 14

Insc. *Brzeska drawing of Mrs Wolmark*

Purchased by the Committee, 1955

This drawing, reproduced pl. 62, Brodzky, *Gaudier Brzeska Drawings*, is related in style to No. 53 in the same book, identified as Alfred Wolmark the artist, who formerly owned this drawing. It reveals Gaudier's command and delicate handling of line.



EMILE ANTOINE BOURDELLE (1861-1929)

French

MADONNA AND CHILD

Bronze 20½ ins

Inscribed *Bourdelle 1919*

Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1948

This work presumably belongs to Bourdelle's late period for it is in the same style as the Monument to Dead Miners at Montceau-les-Mines. More closely it conforms to the conception of his great work *La Vierge d'Alsace*. Bourdelle worked with Rodin but gradually moved away from Rodin's expressionism to a greater dependence on Greek classical sculpture. Here he comes more under the influence of French Romanesque art.

On studying this maquette, one is reminded of his dictum that sculptors should be 'mathematicians in form and musicians in proportion.'



ALEXANDER ARCHIPENKO (born 1887) Russian
TORSO

Bronze ht. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins

Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1948

This is a typical work of a sculptor who in 1911-12 was in the vanguard of discovering new forms. He emphasises the main planes gaining thereby an increased dynamic for his work by using the play of light to its fullest extent. He has also exploited the possibilities of concaves and convexes in many of his early works.



SIR JACOB EPSTEIN (born 1880) British

MADONNA AND CHILD

Lead 14 ins

Purchased by the Committee, 1957

This work is the maquette for the 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ ft sculpture which is placed on the façade of the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, in Cavendish Square, London. The work was completed in 1952. Another maquette is in the possession of Mr Louis Osman, London. The *Madonna and Child* is one of Epstein's major contributions to sculpture since the war, the others being *Lazarus*, and the figure of Christ recently commissioned for Landaff Cathedral. On the full size figure, the Madonna's head is cast down and the Child's arms are extended straight with the palms slightly upwards. The maquette, however, lacks nothing in strength and tenderness.

An illustration of the full size figure is shown opposite.



SIR JACOB EPSTEIN (born 1880) British
PEGGY JEAN
Bronze ht. 8 ins
Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1948

This sculpture of the artist's daughter dates from approximately 1926. A bust of Peggy Jean at 7½ years old was exhibited at the Leicester Galleries in 1926. The artist has done innumerable bronzes and drawings of his daughter. He has a great sensitivity towards children, and writes of his daughter . . . *I never tired of watching her, and to watch her was, for me, to work from her.*



SIR JACOB EPSTEIN (born 1880) British
SUNITA
Charcoal 21½ x 18½
Signed *Epstein*
Purchased by the Committee, 1957

This fine drawing is a study of the Indian woman who, with her son Enver, sat for the sculptor's earlier *Mother and Child* of 1927. Epstein usually chose Negro or Oriental types for his subjects. This drawing was formerly in Arnold Haskell's collection and is reproduced in his book *The Sculptor Speaks*, pl. facing p. 4.



SIR JACOB EPSTEIN (born 1880) British
NEGRESS

Watercolour 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 22 $\frac{3}{4}$

Signed *Epstein*

Purchased by the Committee, 1956

The sculptor has produced many of these watercolours of reclining models. Nearly all are drawn on the same diagonal and have the blank triangle on top right of the paper.



SIR JACOB EPSTEIN (born 1880) British
IAN

Bronze 16 ins

Inscribed *Epstein*

Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1948

This sculpture was completed in 1942 and is reproduced in Epstein's *An Autobiography*, pl.

166. It is almost identical in pose to the earlier bust of *Jackie*, 1955. The hands and arms seem so necessary in the portraiture of a young child. The sculptor has written . . . *To have captured the fugitive and endless expressions and changes of movement of a child has been a rare experience.*

HENRY MOORE, C.H. (born 1898) British
NUDE IN AN ARMCHAIR

Gouache 16½ x 13

Signed *Moore '29*

Purchased by the Committee, 1957

This drawing belongs to a fairly extensive group of similar drawings by the sculptor from 1928 to 1931. (See Read, *Henry Moore*, 3rd ed. Pls. 114, 115c, etc.)

A sculptor's drawings are always intimately connected with work in hand, thus Moore has the capacity in his drawings to convey the volume and monumentality of a three dimensional medium.



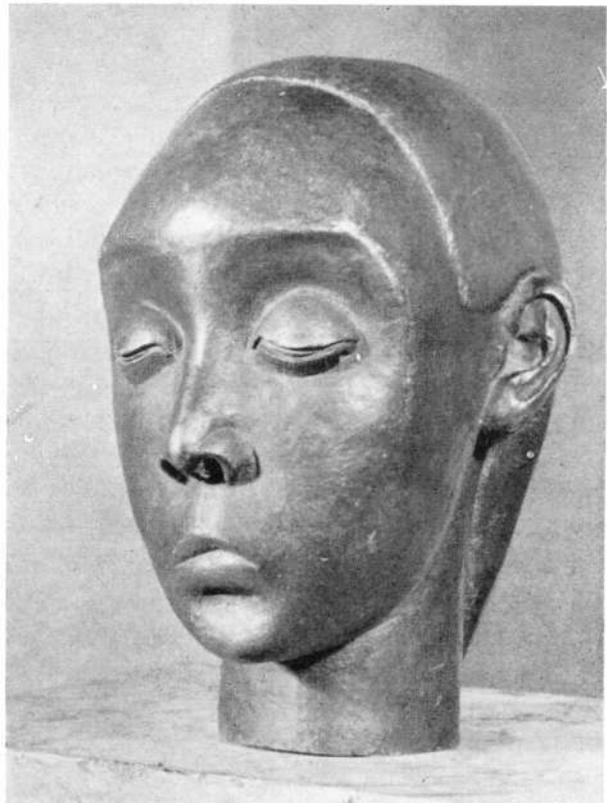
HENRY MOORE (born 1898) British

HEAD OF A GIRL, 1923

Bronze ht 6¾ ins

This is the earliest known work of the sculptor and only three casts were made from the original terracotta head (in the collection of Mrs Lucy Wertheim). One is in the Boymans Museum, Rotterdam, and the other in the collection of W. A. Evill, Esq, London, to whom we are indebted for this information.

The bronze shows directly the influence of the African carving in the British Museum, which the artist visited constantly at this time when he was a student at the Royal College of Art. (Moore's article, *The Listener*, 24th April, 1941, refers to this period.) This work achieves far more, of course, than merely indicating an influence, for it demonstrates Moore's creative grasp of the monumental—a conception which translates the particular into the universal.





HENRY MOORE, C.H. (born 1898) British

TWO SEATED WOMEN AND A CHILD

Bronze 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins

Inscribed *Moore*

Purchased by The Mackelvie Trust, 1948

This maquette is dated 1945. (Read, *Henry Moore*, 3rd ed., pl. 106d.) Seven maquettes exist, one being in the Honolulu Academy of Arts. This group belongs to a series dating to about this time. Although Moore is best appreciated in the full size works, this small sculpture gives some indication of the inter-relationship of forms and a little of the massive statuesqueness of a larger figure.

The family group series derives sculpturally from the *Madonna and Child* (St Mathews, Northampton, 1943-44) and in terms of subject from the great series of *Shelter Drawings* done by Moore during the war.

HENRY MOORE, C.H. (born 1898) British

WOMAN SEATED WITH HANDS CLASPED

Gouache 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 15 $\frac{1}{2}$

Bequest of Sir Edward Marsh through the Contemporary Art Society, 1954

This drawing is related in style to the one overleaf. It therefore can be dated to about the same time. It was first exhibited at the second exhibition of the artist to be held at the Leicester Galleries in 1931.

Moore has written of this method of drawing: 'At one time whenever I made drawings for sculpture I tried to give them as much of the illusion of real sculpture as I could. . . But I now find that carrying a drawing for so far . . . weakens the desire to do the sculpture or is likely to make the sculpture only a dead realization of the drawing.'



Artists Biographies

RODIN was born in Paris. His early training was in Paris and Brussels, 1877-80. His *Bronze Age* in 1877 was accepted by the Salon. He became internationally known in 1900 when he was given a special pavilion in the Paris Exposition. His most important works are *Calais Burghers* (1884-1895) and the Balzac Monument (1895-98). Most of his work is exhibited in the Musée Rodin, Paris, and at Meadon and also in the Rodin Museum, Philadelphia.

DEGAS was born in Paris. He trained first as a lawyer and took lessons with a pupil of Ingres. He visited Italy many times between 1854 and 1860. His first sculptures date from 1866, working mostly in wax and clay. In 1881 he exhibited his *Dancer of 14 years* (coloured clay). Due to the hostile reception of this work, Degas showed no more of his sculptures publicly. After his death over 156 wax models were found in his studio.

MAILLOL was born in Banyuls-sur-Mer. He started as a painter, but became a sculptor at 40. In 1906 he lived in Greece, thereafter living at his birthplace and for a few months a year at Marly-le-Roi. His first exhibition was at the Gallery Vollard, 1905. His principal works are in the Tate, London, Museums of Modern Art in Paris and New York, also in Germany and Switzerland.

GAUDIER-BRZESKA was born at St Jean de Braye. His early training was received in France, England and Germany. He took up sculpture seriously in 1910 in France. Moved to London in 1911. 1913 was his most important year, with an exhibition of sculpture at the Alpine Club. In 1914 he joined the French Army and was killed the following year. Principal works in the Tate, Victoria and Albert, and in America.

BOURDELLE was born at Montauban. Early training at Toulouse and Paris. In 1896 he worked for Rodin. In 1902 he completed *Monument to the Dead*, Montauban. In 1905 first exhibited at the Galerie Hébrard, Paris. Principal works are *Heracles*, *The Archer*, 1909 (Paris, Museum of Modern Art); *Dying*

Centaur, 1914 (Buenos Aires); *Virgin of Alsace*, 1922 (Niederbruch). Bourdelle lectured extensively on sculpture and taught at his studio from 1909 to 1929, the year of his death.

ARCHIPENKO was born at Kiev. Took up sculpture in 1903. Studied in Moscow 1905-8. Moved to Paris 1908. Exhibited in Berlin, The Hague, and in 1910 was associated with the Cubist painters. In 1912 was the first to introduce a greater variety of treatment and the use of transparent materials. He opened a school in Paris in 1912, in Berlin in 1921, which he moved to New York in 1923. He has lived in America ever since. His work can be seen in American and European collections.

EPSTEIN was born in New York. Early training in New York and Paris. Moved to London in 1905. In 1907 completed the carvings for the British Medical Association; 1911, commissioned to carve the Oscar Wilde Tomb in Paris which in 1913 was completed; 1913, *Rock Drill* exhibited with the London Group. His first one-man show was at the Twenty One Gallery, London, in the same year. Principal works: *Rima*, 1925 (Hyde Park); *Visitation*, 1926 (Tate Gallery); *Madonna and Child*, 1927; *Day and Night*, Underground Headquarters Building, Westminster; *Genesis*, 1931 (Alfred Bossom, M.P.); *Adam*, 1938-9; *Lucifer*, 1945 (Birmingham Art Gallery); *Lazarus*, 1949; *Madonna and Child*, 1951-2 (Cavendish Square, London); *Christ*, 1956-7 (Landaff Cathedral).

MOORE was born at Castleford, Yorkshire. Formal art training started at Leeds, 1919, and London. Travelled in Europe 1921. Earliest work 1923. First one-man show, Warren Gallery, 1928. Principal works include: *Mother and Child*, 1925 (Manchester); *North Wind*, 1928 (Underground Building, Westminster); *Reclining Figure*, 1939 (Miss Onslow-Ford); *Madonna and Child*, 1943-4 (St Matthew's, Northampton); *Three Standing Figures* (Battersea Park); *Draped Reclining Figure* (Time/Life Building, London). Represented in most European and American galleries.

